

could volunteer. The very next weekend, he started with that unit. He was a very excited young man and extremely enthusiastic."

Here are some comments from Michael's online journal:

Job well done soldier! You were a true Patriot and warrior keeping America strong . . . You are in Post everlasting now. You will NEVER be forgotten. To the family I can only say your son/husband/friend will forever be a hero. I salute you . . .

John 15:13 says, "Greater love hath no man than this—that a man lay down his life for his friends." I feel so blessed to have known Michael and even more so that he died protecting our way of life as we know it. You will be missed by all who knew you.

Mikey never met a stranger. His personality and love for life was contagious! You will be greatly missed, and I feel lucky to have met such a loved and loving person.

I am incredibly proud of these three men, who gave themselves fully to their families and their commitment to protecting our country.

They loved being soldiers and made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.

Dan, Brady and Mikey were men of strong character, full of personality and sense of humor, and courage in the face of war.

I want to salute each of you. You are our heroes. You are all incredible men, patriots, fathers, husbands, sons, grandsons, uncles, and friends. You are what this country is all about, we will never forget you.

This country will never be able to adequately repay you, or your families, for your service and the sacrifice you have made to this nation.

I am honored to pay tribute to you today and know that our thoughts and prayers are with you and your families.

And to the loved ones, it is my understanding that all three of these heroes knew Jesus and knew the Lord well. I would say to you this: this is a wink of time that we are here. This is not goodbye to Dan, Brady, Mikey; it is: We will see you later.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Texas is recognized.

DC GUN RIGHTS

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I rise to talk about a very important issue, and that is gun rights, the second amendment gun rights for our country.

As we are dealing with the financial stabilization program which is being negotiated, the continuing resolution, which will come over from the House shortly, we do have time to talk about some of the other issues that are so important for our country.

I think the second amendment rights of people who live in the District of Columbia are very important. There was a Supreme Court case, a landmark ruling, that was made by the Supreme Court of the United States a couple months ago that said: The District of Columbia gun ban was unconstitutional.

Many of us in Congress helped with an amicus brief, a brief to the Court signed by a majority of the Members of the House and the Senate, that asked that the Court overturn this DC gun ban because it was the most restrictive outright gun ban in all of America, and it clearly violated the rights of the people of the District of Columbia.

The Court agreed. Now many of us who were hoping to pursue this right for the people of the District of Columbia, which is under the auspices of Congress, waited to see what the District City Council would do. We hoped they would do the right thing and adhere to the Supreme Court ruling, which affirmed that their ban on the ownership of handguns was unconstitutional.

The District then came out with an almost incomprehensible ordinance that does continue to make it very difficult for someone to exercise their constitutional right to own a gun.

The District allows registration of pistols for use in self-defense within the applicant's home. So it does not allow the ownership of a handgun in a person's business, to have self-defense in their business, but it does allow it in the home.

But then the ordinance goes on to say that it is a policy of the District of Columbia that firearms should be stored unloaded and either disassembled or locked, which is the complete opposite result of the original ruling.

I do not think anyone in America would consider an unlocked, unloaded gun to be potentially used for self-defense if someone is entering their home illegally.

The firearm registration requirements are onerous. As a condition for registration, the District requires applicants to pay separate, unlimited fees for filing their registration, applicants have their mandatory fingerprints processed, and have their handguns run through a ballistic imaging process.

What we are trying to do now is say you would have the ability to own a handgun for your personal use in your home for self-defense for you and your family. We also want to authorize DC residents to buy handguns from licensed dealers in Maryland or Virginia because, of course, there is only one gun dealer in the District of Columbia because there has been such a shortage of guns that a gun owner would sell because you could not have one.

Because there is a current Federal law against interstate handgun sales, only Congress can authorize this. So the only way a person will have the ability to buy from a licensed dealer—and a licensed dealer must pass a record check by the National Instant Criminal Background Check System; all of that would be enforced, but we do need to have the ability for someone to have a reasonable place to go if they are going to buy a gun to protect themselves and their family.

The bottom line is, as soon as we have representation on the floor by both parties, I intend to ask unani-

mous consent that we proceed to consideration of the bill. Now, the bill is H.R. 6842. It passed the House overwhelmingly last week. We want to take up that bill. In fact, I have a letter to Senator REID signed by 47 Members of the Senate, and I am asking that be submitted for the RECORD.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the letter be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE,

Washington, DC, September 19, 2008.

Hon. HARRY REID,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR LEADER REID: On June 26, 2008, the Supreme Court issued a landmark ruling affirming the Second Amendment right to bear arms as an individual and constitutionally protected right. In *District of Columbia v. Heller*, the court affirmed that the District of Columbia's ban on ownership of handguns was an unconstitutional restriction on that right. The majority held "that the District's ban on handgun possession in the home violates the Second Amendment, as does its prohibition against rendering any lawful firearm in the home operable for the purpose of immediate self-defense."

For more than thirty years, the District of Columbia has subjected residents to the most prohibitive gun control laws of any city in the nation, requiring rifles and shotguns to be registered, stored unloaded, and either locked or disassembled. Despite the Court's ruling in June, the District of Columbia city council has continued to exact onerous and unconstitutional firearm regulations on law-abiding residents.

This week, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 6842, the National Capital Security and Safety Act. This bipartisan bill was overwhelmingly approved with a vote 266-152. We ask you to ensure that D.C. residents do not have to wait any longer to realize their constitutional rights by allowing the full Senate to consider H.R. 6842 before the 110th Congress concludes.

Sincerely,

Kay Bailey Hutchison; Jon Tester; Saxby Chambliss; Judd Gregg; Richard Burr, John Ensign; Johnny Isakson; John E. Sununu; John McCain; Lisa Murkowski; Jim DeMint; —; Kit Bond; John Cornyn; Mike Enzi; Ted Stevens; Orrin Hatch; Chuck Grassley; Max Baucus; Larry E. Craig; Mel Martinez; Thad Cochran; Roger Wicker; Sam Brownback; Lindsey Graham; Pat Roberts; John Thune; Richard Shelby; Mike Crapo; David Vitter; John Barrasso; Elizabeth Dole; George V. Voinovich; Pete V. Domenici; Jim Inhofe; Wayne Allard; Norm Coleman; E. Benjamin Nelson; Tim Johnson; Bob Corker; Lamar Alexander; Jon Kyl; Gordon H. Smith; Olympia Snowe; Susan M. Collins; Mary Landrieu, Mitch McConnell.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Forty-seven of our Members have asked the majority leader to allow this bill to be taken up so we can pass it and send it to the President and assure that the people of the District of Columbia have the same second amendment right that is allowed to every other person in our country. So I would ask whether the Chair is able to speak for the majority

or if you prefer I wait for another person to come to the floor. I can do that or I can do it now.

I will withhold. I ask unanimous consent that as soon as the leader is finished, I be recognized again to make my motion.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Republican leader is recognized.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Texas.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

CAPTAIN ERIC D. TERHUNE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to one of our bravest warriors who gave his life to defend us. U.S. Marine Corps CPT Eric D. Terhune of Lexington, KY, was conducting a security patrol in the Farah Province of Afghanistan on June 19, 2008, when he was killed by enemy small-arms fire. He was 34 years old.

For his heroism in service, Captain Terhune received several awards, medals and decorations, including the Strike/Flight Air Medal, the Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal, two National Defense Service Medals and the Armed Forces Service Medal.

Those who knew Captain Terhune would describe him as a man committed to serving his country and proud to wear the uniform. In fact, as his uncle, David Terhune, puts it, since Eric was born in a Naval hospital in Quantico, VA, where his father was on active duty, "Eric was born a Marine."

Eric was also committed to his faith. When family members expressed worry about his dangerous job, he told them, "If I live, it's wonderful. But if I die, it's absent from the body and present with the Lord."

Eric was raised in Lexington, attended Tates Creek Presbyteria Church and studied at Wheaton Academy in Wheaton, IL. As a kid he was active in everything from Cub Scouting and Boy Scouting to soccer and Little League baseball.

Eric was also a competitive swimmer who loved to hunt and scuba dive. As a marine, he would dive to collect shells and sharks' teeth in the many places the Corps sent him.

Once on a sail boat trip with his family, when it was Eric's turn to do the dishes after dinner, he came up with a creative cleaning method—he threw them in the ocean, put on his scuba gear, and retrieved the dishes from the water.

Upon high school graduation, Eric enlisted in the same branch his father and grandfather had once served in, the Marine Corps. After 4 years as a non-commissioned officer and a reconnaissance sharpshooter, Eric dreamt of becoming a Naval aviator like his dad.

This required a college degree. So with some encouragement from his grandparents, Daniel and Joy Terhune, he used his GI bill benefits to enroll at Morehead State University.

At Morehead, Eric made the honor roll and competed on the varsity rifle team. "There [was] no doubt . . . when Eric turned in his targets from a rifle match, who pulled the trigger," his uncle David says. "He was an expert sharpshooter."

Upon graduation, Eric received his commission as a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps. He then spent a year at Naval Air Station Pensacola and earned his coveted wings of gold.

Eric flew the CH-53 Sea Stallion helicopter during his first tour in Iraq. His friends in the Corps nicknamed him "D-Ring," after the D-ring located overhead in the helicopters he flew to be pulled in case of emergency.

His fellow marines spoke highly of Eric. His commanding officer, LTC Richard D. Hall, says,

"D-Ring," as we all affectionately called him, and [as] was his aviator's call-sign, was a Marine that everyone liked; and I mean everybody. He had a gracious and kind personality that was truly infectious; so much so, that I too became infected by his wonderful persona.

MAJ Darby Wiler was Eric's staff platoon commander at The Basic School, where newly commissioned marine officers are sent for weapons, tactical, and leadership training. Major Wiler says, "Eric's work ethic was unparalleled amongst his peers."

"Even in the midst of the most unpleasant circumstances that The Basic School had to offer, he was always upbeat, motivated, and ready to go," the major adds.

Eric volunteered for a second tour of Iraq, which he completed last November. When his ship, the U.S.S. *Denver*, arrived in Pearl Harbor, he was allowed to give one family member the honor of joining him and his crew for the final leg of the voyage home to San Diego. Eric chose his grandfather.

"That trip halfway across the Pacific Ocean together, eating together in the ward room, watching ships operations from the bridge, showing his grandfather how to shoot an M-16, how to shoot a .50 Caliber machine gun . . . this was the greatest of bonding experiences for both of them," says Eric's uncle David.

"Eric has told me many times what a blast it was to share those days with Dad. For Dad, it was an indescribable joy to see his grandson performing as a Marine and standing tall as a Christian officer."

After his two tours in Iraq, Eric expected to return to training to qualify as a helicopter pilot. But then he learned the Marine Corps was short of forward air controllers—an important position, responsible for directing other aircraft in close air support and requiring substantial experience.

"He had a lot of conversations with his dad—'What do you think about this Afghanistan thing?'" David recalls. "His dad laid out the pros and cons, and Eric said, 'Look, if you're in the Marine Corps, you don't duck the fight.'"

Eric volunteered and was deployed to Afghanistan in April of this year with the 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, based out of Twentynine Palms, CA.

"We have heard numerous reports of him volunteering to take the place of some of his friends who had a wife and children," David says.

Eric brought the same work ethic he carried with him throughout his career to Afghanistan. CPT Carlos R. Cuevas who served alongside Eric in Afghanistan, remembers when he first met Eric.

"I believe the first thing he asked me was, 'Hey, Captain Cuevas, can you tell me where the armory is and who I need to talk to get my weapon?'" the captain remembers. "As a fellow captain and Marine . . . I can tell you his professionalism and enthusiasm for his job was readily apparent," the captain says.

"He loved being a pilot, a Marine, and most of all serving alongside his fellow Marines."

Eric couldn't write or call his family often from Afghanistan, but they were always happy when he did. On June 16 he sent what would be his final e-mail.

"He wrote and addressed each of his cousins by name, encouraging them, affirming them, giving advice to them," says David. "And [he] expressed his longing to join us at our next family gathering."

Three days after that e-mail, Mr. President, Eric was killed. And although nothing we say here today can alleviate the pain of his family, I know my colleagues join me in expressing our deepest sympathies to them for their tragic loss.

We are thinking of Eric's father and stepmother Paul and Carleen Terhune; his grandparents Daniel and Joy Terhune; his uncle and aunt David and Dotti Terhune; many beloved family members, including Dr. and Mrs. Oliver Jeromin, Dr. and Mrs. Richard Colquitt, David W. Terhune, Jr., Rebecca Joy Terhune, Bea Hansgen, and many others.

I will leave the final words to Eric's uncle David, who describes his nephew this way. Eric "was, in the best sense of the word, an officer and a gentleman and a patriot," David says. "I always admired his strength and his power, but he was also gentle at the same time."

Mr. President, this U.S. Senate honors CPT Eric D. Terhune as an officer, a gentleman, and a patriot. We are grateful for his years of service to our Nation and his great sacrifice. And we send our profound thanks to the Terhune family for giving their country this heroic marine. It is only by men such as he that every American can stand tall and free.

STAFF SERGEANT CHRISTOPHER N. HAMLIN

Mr. President, I rise to also honor another fallen member of our Armed Forces. This Nation is honored to have the finest arsenal of freedom in the